

America, with

*Tracts
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Hypocrisy Unmasked

OR,

A SHORT INQUIRY

INTO THE

RELIGIOUS COMPLAINTS

OF OUR

AMERICAN COLONIES.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A WORD ON THE LAWS AGAINST
POPERY IN GREAT BRITAIN
AND IRELAND.

The motto of all Religions is the Religion of Humanity.
WALFORD'S Lives of Noble Authors.

LONDON:

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Hypocrite Unmasked

A SHORT HISTORY

OF THE

RELIGIOUS COMPANIES

OF OUR

AMERICAN COLONIES



LONDON:

[Printed by T. Agnew & Sons, Ltd.]

HYPOCRISY UNMASKED,

&c. &c.

IT has long been the policy of faction, to connect the interests of party with the security of religion, and to build the most desperate views of ambition, upon the mistaken piety of mankind. Without recurring to the remoter periods of history, we may remember that the Holy League plunged France into all the horrors of a civil war, by pretending an uncommon zeal for the purity of the Catholic communion; and in our own annals we may recollect, that Cromwell's hypocritical solicitude for the glory of the Lord, was the chief engine which enabled him to overturn the constitution.

-The disaffected Colonies, in imitation of these illustrious examples, have for some time played off their spiritual artillery upon the British nation, and endeavoured to kindle the flame of enthusiasm among our people, by representing the grant of the Popish religion to the Canadians, as a measure highly alarming to every Protestant of the empire.

Their adherents on our side of the Atlantic, have sustained them vigorously in this service, and where they could not engage us to support the political complaints of America, they have addressed us pathetically on the dangers of the church.

Hence opposition, has lately exhibited preachers from the turf, and reformers from the gaming table. Hence men whose lives are a scandal to all religion, have suddenly started up into champions of the orthodox faith, and hence the whole army of patriots have pronounced the Quebec act a more dangerous *innovation* if possible, than even the imposition of a revenue upon the Americans.

Highly to the credit of our national good sense, these attempts to excite a spirit of persecution among us, have been treated with
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the contempt which they merited, and we have neither judged it honourable for our country, to violate the public faith, nor beneficial for the Protestant cause, to trample upon the rights of humanity.

Yet as the popular clamour against the law for regulating the government of Quebec still continues, it may be proper (for the purpose of undeceiving the misled) to shew in a few words, first, that popery so far from gaining an *original* establishment under the Canada act, was established in an English Colony above *a century* before Canada belonged to the crown of England; and secondly, that the Catholic religion so far from being *in the least* disagreeable to the disaffected Colonies, is not only allowed under the hands of the very congress, to be *perfectly consistent with the freedom of the Protestant Provinces*, but to be a right which the Canadians possess from THE IMMEDIATE GIFT OF GOD.

Difficult soever as the proof of these positions may appear at a first view, nothing is more easy, and therefore I submit myself without any farther preliminary to the judgment of the reader.

Sir Cecilius Calvert, Lord Baltimore, the first proprietor of Maryland, was an avowed Roman Catholic, and obtained a Charter for that Colony, solely with a view of establishing a settlement where he himself, as well as others of his church, might enjoy the free exercise of religion. Before the Charter just mentioned, that tract of country now distinguished by the name of Maryland, composed a part of Virginia; but it was judged expedient for the purpose of planting this Catholic Colony, to dismember Virginia, to declare the new plantation wholly independent of the Virginian laws, and to render it solely subject to the crown of England.

The division of Virginia in this manner to indulge the Roman Catholics, was not the only favour conferred on them; on the contrary, they were distinguished with immunities superior to all the other Colonies; and Maryland was the first settlement honoured with the title of *Province*; "That the country thus granted (I speak the language of the Charter) might be eminent above all other parts of the said territory, (English America) and dignified with higher titles."

The powers with which the popish proprietor was himself invested, were very ample; the whole executive authority of the state was centred in his person; and in cases of emergency, the whole legislative authority also. In these cases, his ordinances were deemed of equal validity with the public acts of the Provincial legislature, and were only so far restrained, as neither to injure the rights of the subject, nor to oppose the laws of England. He had the liberty of levying troops, and the privilege of conferring titles, provided the titles he conferred were not used in the Mother-Country. He was empowered to pardon all offences, whether before or after judgment. He was even made the universal patron of all the *Protestant* churches which might be erected in the Colony; and finally, to complete the encouragement of popery, the inhabitants of Maryland were expressly exempted from taxation, a favour which had not been bestowed upon *any one* of the Protestant Colonies.

The reason for this partiality in the crown to the Roman Catholic religion, is easily accounted for; in the reigns of James the First and his son Charles, the ministry attempted to make the Colonies solely depend-

ent upon the person of the king, and in these unsettled periods of our constitution, the Commons were sometimes checked, when they ventured to consider America as an appendage belonging to the kingdom. The Roman Catholics therefore being judged most devoted to the claims of monarchy, were treated with the greatest degree of regard by the sovereign; and as the laws would not allow them an equality with Protestants in England, it was judged politic to grant them a superiority in America.

Besides the more discordant the religions and the constitutions of the several Provinces were *, the greater the probability appeared of their severally attaching themselves to their common head; and as the republicans emigrated very fast, it was thought proper to counterbalance their influence, by a Colony heartily disposed to favour the pretensions of the crown.

* This accounts for the different forms of Colony government; Papists were not tolerated in Massachusetts Bay, nor by the last American Charter in Georgia.

The Maryland Charter was granted by Charles the First to Lord Baltimore in the year 1632, just 143 years previous to the act for regulating the constitution of Canada; yet the disaffected Provinces did not discover till the year 1774, that popery had ever been established in any part of British America. Nay, what is still more extraordinary, the Marylanders themselves, are now become such excellent Protestants, that they never heard of an establishment given to the popish religion, till the late obnoxious law for settling the government of Quebec. They totally forget that their own existence as a Colony, is owing to this very religion which they abhor, and so zealous are they for the uncorrupted doctrines of Christ, that they oppose the Catholic communion, at the immediate expence of every principle which is founded upon Christianity.

It may possibly answer the purposes of the disaffected Colonies, to forget many essential circumstances of their history, but there are several things in ours, which should hold a constant place in the recollection of every thinking Englishman. And first we should remember, notwithstanding all the senseless clamour against popery, that

wherever we have made an acquisition of any foreign dominion to the British crown, there is not a single instance of such a stain upon our national humanity, as an attempt to force either our laws or our religion upon the people.

The French islands of Jersey and Guernsey, annexed to this kingdom, through the Norman line, almost five hundred years before the discovery of America, still retain their native customs and their native faith. The inhabitants of Minorca, have in like manner been indulged with their own laws, no less than with their own religion, and it would have been barbarous to deny them either, when the full enjoyment of both, (as the event has proved) can be tolerated with such perfect security to the interests of this country. Why then the Canadians, who had a claim to their religion not by favour, but by right; not by a condition equivocally implied, but by a positive stipulation, should be refused as much tenderness as our Roman Catholic subjects in Europe, will scarcely be accounted for, unless the exquisite Protestants of the Congress, have adopted what they abominate as papistical tenets, unless they think that the religion of truth should be propagated by the

the basest fraud, and deem it highly meritorious to act perfidiously with all of a different communion from themselves.

But admitting for argument sake, that the late act to regulate the government of Canada, had given an *unprecedented* establishment to the Roman Catholic religion; and admitting also, that the national honour had not been expressly engaged for the grant to the Canadians, still there can be no just reason why the rebellious Colonies should number that act in the catalogue of their grievances. They are no way affected by the laws of the Province in question, and it is not a little extraordinary that they should dispute the right of the Mother Country to govern others, however they may deny her authority to govern themselves.

Their objection to the Canada Act besides, is the more unreasonable, because in the very Province where the Congress is at this moment deliberating, the free exercise of the Romish communion is universally allowed. Nay, in Pennsylvania the members of this faith, are as eligible to all the honourable employments of the state, as the members of the Protestant church, and it is that circumstance chiefly, to which we may attribute its superiority

riority over every one of our other Colonies, not only in the point of wealth, but in the article of population.

The enlarged mind of William Penn the first proprietor, saw that he had an extensive country to people, and felt that instead of discouraging settlers by religious restraints, it was his interest to court them by every possible indulgence. Judging no less wisely as a philosopher, than benevolently as a man, he perceived that the circumstance of private opinion in spirituals, was a matter of no consequence whatever to the state, provided the individual could be made a valuable subject*; he therefore invited emigrants of all denominations, and placed Christians of every profession, upon an exact line of political equality.

The conduct of William Penn, in this respect, gave no alarm whatever, to any other Colony, because no other Colony had a right to meddle in the government of Pennsylvania. Every particular Province was regulated by its own particular laws, and was controul-

* Upon this principle parliament, in the 13th year of George the Second, gave even the Jews the rights of natural born subjects in America.

able solely by the supremacy of the Mother Country.

It must indeed be owned that the Colonies give a temporal reason for their spiritual objections to the Quebec Act, and say that the dominion of Canada is now "so extended, modelled, and governed, as that by being disunited from us, detached from our interests, by civil as well as religious prejudices, that by their numbers daily swelling with Catholic emigrants from Europe, and by their devotion to administration *so friendly to their religion*, they might become formidable to us, and on occasion be fit instruments in the hands of power, to reduce the ancient free Protestant Colonies, to the same state of slavery with themselves."

This the last Congress affirm in the 38th page of their pamphlet*, where they address the people of Great Britain, to be the evident object of the Canada Act; and they add in the same page. "Nor can we suppress our astonishment, that a British parliament should ever consent to establish in that country a religion, that has deluged your island in blood, and dispersed impiety,

* See the Extracts from the Votes and Proceedings of the Congress published in 1774.

bigotry,

bigotry, persecution, murder and rebellion through every part of the world." The candid reader will perhaps imagine in this place, that the united Colonies really think the Canada Act too favourable to the Catholic Religion, and imagine that their apprehensions are not wholly without foundation. The Poles, however, are not more opposite than this opinion to the truth. For the very same publication which conveys the foregoing sentiments of terror to the honest unsuspecting Protestants of this kingdom, conveys also a letter from the disaffected Colonies to the people of Canada, containing not only the highest eulogium on the character of the Canadians, but representing them rather as objects of British *vengeance* than of British *favour*, in the late Act for regulating their government. Nay, in this letter the Congress disarm popery of all her racks, of all her engines, and even deny parliament the merit of giving her a *toleration*; they pronounce the free enjoyment of the popish religion, a right which the Catholics derive from the immediate gift of God, and then requesting that Canadian delegates may be sent to Philadelphia, instance the Swiss Cantons, to prove that a difference in spiritual opinions, is perfectly compatible

compatible with the political welfare of society.

The reader will deem the foregoing assertion impossible, and naturally suppose that if the Congress could be so lost to all shame, as to write such a panegyric on the popish religion, they could not be so lost to all sense, as to publish it with the same letter which reprobates popery to the people of Great Britain. Strange nevertheless as this may appear, the Congress have been guilty both of the wickedness, and of the folly with which they are here charged, and to put the fact beyond a doubt, the world shall here have the proof in their own words. In the seventy-second page of the pamphlet printed under their authority in 1774, they tell the Canadians what privileges they are entitled to as British subjects, and then add "These are the rights you are entitled to, and ought at this moment in perfection to exercise. And what is offered to you by the late Act of Parliament in their place?—Liberty of conscience in your religion?—No—GOD GAVE IT TO YOU, and the temporal powers, with which you have been and are connected, FIRMLY STIPULATED for your ENJOYMENT of it. IF LAWS DIVINE AND HUMAN could

could secure it against the despotic caprices of wicked men, it was secured before." Here are American wisdom, justice, and piety, for the people of Great Britain ! The religion which in page 38th the parliament had NO AUTHORITY to grant, belongs in page 72 by right *divine* to the Canadians ; and though *there* it has dispersed " impiety, persecution, murder and rebellion, through the world," yet *here* it becomes the IMMEDIATE GIFT OF GOD !

The Congress in page 38th are afflicted because administration has been *too* favourable to the religion of Canada. In page 72, they are afflicted because administration has not been favourable *enough* ; and the better to raise discontents among the French Provincials, tell them " that the crown and its ministers are empowered as far as they could be by parliament, to establish even the *inquisition* among them." To complete the whole, the Congress thus address the Canadians in page 79 : " We are too well acquainted with the liberality of sentiment distinguishing *your* nation, to imagine that *difference of religion* will prejudice you against a hearty amity with us. You know that the *transcendent nature of freedom* elevates those

who unite in the cause, above all such *low minded infirmities*. The Swiss Cantons furnish a memorable proof of this truth. Their union is composed of *Catholic and Protestant states*, living in the *utmost concord and peace with one another*, and thereby enabled; ever since they bravely vindicated their freedom, to defy and defeat every tyrant which has invaded them."

It is impossible in this place to decide, whether our indignation at the Colonies should be most excited by the baseness of their hypocrisy, or the insolence of their presumption. After representing the Canadians as a nation of blood-thirsty bigots, highly dangerous to the freedom of the Protestant Provinces, we here see the Congress meanly flattering these bigots as they call them, into rebellion; and assuming the very powers themselves, which they arrogantly deny to the parliament of this kingdom. The legislature of Great Britain, according to their resolutions, must not grant the people of Quebec the free exercise of that religion, for which the public honour of the kingdom is solemnly pledged. The Delegates, however, may grant them all the rights of Protestant subjects resident within the realm. When
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the legislature of Great Britain thinks of arming the Canadians, then the difference of their communion instantly threatens the total overthrow of our glorious constitution. But when the Delegates want to arm them, "then the *exalted nature of freedom* lifts the French above all the *low minded infirmities* arising from a dissimilarity of faith;" and it becomes perfectly justifiable in the Colonies to cut our throats with popish swords, though it is horrible in us, to think of employing Papists against the Colonies.

And here we must remark besides, that tho' the Delegates *press* the full enjoyment of their religious rights upon the Papists of Canada, they have always denied this favour to the church of England. When the bare mention of sending out a bishop to America, for the interests of our established communion, has been made, the whole Continent (if we except the poor episcopalians) has fired at the idea, and destruction has been denounced against the first mitre which should dare to appear in any one of the Colonies.

In consequence of this, the members of the English church have not only lost the religious rite of confirmation, but have been constantly obliged at an immense hazard,

zard, as well as at an immense expence, to send such of their youth to this country for ordination, as they have dedicated to the service of the altar. Let us therefore hope, when tranquillity is restored, that this circumstance will be properly remembered, and that the Colonies will graciously think the church of England as much entitled to the full enjoyment of her religion as the church of Rome, by the immediate gift of God.

Far be it from me in this place to cast the least reflection on the Catholic communion; I have an equal reverence for good men of all persuasions, and I know that the Father of infinite mercy (to borrow an expression from a great writer) is neither a Protestant, nor a Papist; neither a Presbyterian nor a Quaker. His religion is the religion of boundless benevolence, and that system of faith is most acceptable in his sight, which is most consonant to the exalted principles of humanity.

Such therefore being my opinion of religion in general, it cannot be imagined that I entertain any particular objection to the professors of popery. On the contrary, I have long thought our laws against them highly oppressive, and in the present state
of

of public affairs, I would ask whether common policy does not loudly call for a *relaxation*, at least, of these laws, not only in Great Britain, but in Ireland?

In this kingdom the Statutes against Roman Catholics are very rigorous. But in Ireland they are absolutely horrible. There the bonds of Nature are torn asunder, as well as the ties of justice. There the son is encouraged to rob his father*, and is set down as an excellent Protestant, when he has perpetrated a deed for which he ought to be hunted from human society.

Some people indeed imagine, that if the popery laws were relaxed, the Roman Catholics would attempt to call in a prince of their own religion, and perhaps overturn the constitution. For my part, I do not know what the Papists could possibly gain either by rivetting chains upon themselves, or by entailing slavery upon their posterity;

* If the son of an Irish Papist, where there is even an estate in fee, conforms to the Church of England, the father is instantly reduced to a tenant for life, and the Conformist inherits in fee, to the utter exclusion of every settlement that may have been made for the general interests of the family.

but this I know, that two rebellions have taken place since the accession of the Brunswick family, to raise a popish pretender to the throne of these kingdoms, yet the Catholics did not engage in either. On the contrary, both were supported by the most inveterate enemies to their communion, and at this moment when twelve Protestant Colonies of all denominations, are rebelling against the authority of the British legislature, we find that neither the most plausible arts, nor the most formidable invasion, has been able to detach a newly acquired Province of French Papists, from their allegiance to our government.

A behaviour of such a nature on the part of the Roman Catholics, deserves the highest encouragement. The restraints originally laid upon popery, arose entirely from political motives, and the punishment should naturally cease with the offence; where is our justice, if we visit the sins of the fathers upon the heads of their unoffending posterity? Or where is our policy in treating so large a body of subjects as enemies to the state, when we actually find them among the most peaceable members of the whole community?

If,

If, however, we are neither actuated by motives of justice nor tenderness to the Roman Catholics, we should be influenced by a prudent consideration for our own interest; and since Protestants can take up arms against the constitution, why should not Papists be employed to preserve it?—Fifty thousand gallant fellows now groaning under the weight of religious disabilities, might be speedily raised in Ireland; and that loyal kingdom might be converted into a constant nursery for the armies of Great Britain, whereas by the fatal impolicy of the laws, the chief advantages of her military strength are now constantly possessed by our enemies. This evil is universally acknowledged, yet no attempt whatever is made to remove it. And to the astonishment of all the world, tho' Papists are received without scruple to fight our battles at sea, they are not permitted to venture their lives by land, for the welfare of their country*.

The present moment is peculiarly favourable to a reformation in this part of our political system. The Congress can make no

* In Mr. Pitt's administration, it was deemed a stroke of exquisite policy, to raise recruits from the least affected parts of Scotland, for the service in America.

objection to it, because we have it under their own hands, that Roman Catholics are not only as strenuous in support of freedom as Protestants*, but that they possess their religion from the immediate gift of God. The opposition in parliament can make no objection to it, because they implicitly adopt the sentiments of the Colonies. The citizens of London can make no objection to it, because they are Americans in principle also, and have lately voted their freedom in a gold box to Doctor Price, for asserting among other things, that any restraints whatever upon the conscience, are destructive to the inherent rights of mankind. And finally, the Protestants of Ireland can make no objection to the measure, because if Lord Chatham himself is to be credited, they are likewise "*to a man*," animated in all things by the spirit of America!

What then should prevent government, in the present state of public affairs, from turning the attachment of the Papists to the benefit of the nation? In answer to this question some honest Protestant may reply, that let us talk as we please, Papists are nevertheless incorrigible bigots, and may, if not severely re-

* The stand made by the Corsicans against the French, is universally celebrated by the friends of the Colonies, as another proof of this assertion.

strained,

strained, destroy us all in the end; as they hold their lives entirely at the devotion of the pope.

If the Papists are indeed such incorrigible bigots, I shall barely observe, that they have a very whimsical way of shewing their implicit obedience to the head of their church; for the sovereign pontiff, from being the disposer of kingdoms, has gradually sunk into one of the least considerable potentates of Europe within two centuries; and the half of Europe also, has not only been converted from popery within the same period, but what is still more remarkable, a few Roman Catholic priests have been the original authors of all this reformation.

Even in the times of superstition, the Roman Catholics were wise enough to prefer their own interest to the authority of the pope. Francis the First who continued a Papist all his life, fought to support the Protestant League, when the reformation commenced; and the emperor Charles the Fifth, imprisoned Pope Clement the Seventh in the castle of St. Angelo, tho' his Imperial majesty was not only the grand persecutor of the Reformers, but so priest-ridden, as to terminate his days in the monastery of St. Justus.

THE END.



